

Judge Reed C' O'Connor (7-24-16)

Your Honor my name is Terry Shure and at some point in the very near future I will be standing before you awaiting your sentence to be imposed upon me. I most certainly understand that you are a very busy man, but if you would please be so kind as to read this through to its completion I would like to give you a bit of insight into my life at which point I feel you will understand my reason for having written you this letter.

I was passed between family members for the first couple years of my life cause my mother being fourteen at the time of conception and fifteen at the time of my birth with me being a product of rape she was ill prepared to handle a child. I was two years old when my mother married the most abusive man physically and mentally that I have ever known to-date, and moved us to California. He was a walking ball of alcoholic anger that would choke, beat, and verbally put my mother and I down. I have a brother who is three years younger than me and a sister that is three years younger than him. Many times my brother and I were kept home from school to allow bruising and or

helps to go away. Such as the time my brother and I both got black, blue, and purple all the way down our back and legs for having woke him up while playing with our Ninga turtles on a Saturday morning. That time he used a syphening hose, or the time I opened the bathroom door to him choking my mom naked up against the wall, and he beat me for not closing the door fast enough. I would often take blame or try to divert attention so as to help my brother avoid the brunt of his anger, but his attention always seemed focused on me anyway. Which makes sense cause when I was eight years old my mother and father separated (divorced) that my mom was left with little choice but to tell me the truth about my dad. Turns out the man I had always thought to be my real father was not my father. It made sense then why he beat me so much worse and more often than my siblings. Seeing as how they were his blood and I was not.

Ofcourse my brother and sister went to live with their father while I was soon to start my unpleasant journey that was the California foster care system, because my mom took to using drugs like a fish out of water. Between

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the ages of eight and somewhere in my fourteenth year I was shuffled between foster homes transitional housing, and my mother whenever she could convince the state she was fit to have me. That of course would never last long because she would do things like leave me at home alone for long periods of time with little or nothing to eat till someone would notice. On one occasion it had ^{been} almost two weeks, and for the last couple of days of that time I had been living off of a head of lettuce that was the only thing in the fridge left capable of safe consumption. When that ran out hunger led me to the neighbor, but I was always so afraid of getting her in trouble or being taken away again. One summer she had my brother and sister, and what I remember about that summer is making roman noodles for lunch and dinner days on end for my siblings and I then taking some to my mother because she was dope sick in bed from what I assume now that I am grown to have been heroin. I'll never forget being told to hold the tie around my mom's arm while she shot up because she said it was the only way she wouldn't be sick. At the time ^{we left} the apartment just after dark and my mom was attacked by six african american men who robbed her for our rent money then held

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her down while one of them tore her clothes off and started to sexually assault her. It all happened so fast right there on the sidewalk of the apartment complex) as if it were the thing to do while a nine year old me cried and hid behind the tire of a nearby car because I was too scared to move or do anything. The first time I ever got drunk my mom's friends kept handing a nine year old me the bottle of Jack Daniels. I wanted to impress them, be, and or to be cool and expected so bad that I drank as much as I could as fast as I could. I woke up in my room the next day an hour and a half from where we had been covered in vomit and a bad cut on my shoulder.

The foster care system was in its own way an entirely different kind of abuse. Its one I find hard to explain, but it was without a doubt the most alone, unloved, or insignificant I ever felt growing up. At least I could lie to or manipulate myself into believing my mother loved me, and at times I think she did, but I couldn't convince myself of that even with the foster homes that weren't physically abusive. I would always run away from the ones that were physically abusive, which happened a few times. It was the time a family took me in because

they wanted there son to have a brother to play
th, or I should say there son wanted a brother
to play with. It soon became obvious the boys
there would never see me as his own when his
son accidentally got hurt while we were being
loos, and he slapped me around and drug
me down the stairs. I had had enough of
men like him so I ran away again. I was on
the street for months that time doing whatever
I had to in order to survive.

My mom at some point while I was
on the street that time after being gone for months
went to or called my case worker raising hell
and saying its wrong that they wouldn't let
her have me cause she was unfit, but they
didn't have a clue where I was. So Mr Peon
told her if she found me she could have
me. Soon after I called her late one night
crying and that is how at fourteen she got
me back. By the time I was sixteen she had
been back to her old self for some time, so I
left for the last time as an adolescent. I stayed in
Fort Dodge Iowa where we lived at that time
with zero family and few friends while my mom
moved back to Texas. It wasn't till I was
nineteen going on twenty that I moved
back to Texas. I can remember well

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What went through my head the first time I ever used. I wanted to know what was so powerful or important that my mother would choose it over me or my siblings so many times. I later understood that she used drugs to cope. Perhaps because of the things she went through growing up, or as some form of escape from reality or pain. Not to the same extent, but I know I used for those same reasons.

Your honor I am by no means making excuses, and my reason for writing you this letter is because I realize that something in my life has got to change. I can survive under the worst of circumstances, hide my emotions, and am surprised by nothing. Mostly cause I expect the worst, but for all that none of it helps me much in real life. I know I have a drug problem, and am in desperate need of coping skills. I have unresolved issues and need to learn how to deal with them. I don't want to spend my life in and out of prison, and am willing to do whatever it takes to break this cycle. I am very grateful for you taking the time to read this (Thank You) and will accept and be grateful for any and all help you can give me. Terry Sherro